# What is the Bible?

→The Bible is the account of God's action in the world and his purpose with all creation.

→The writing of the Bible took place over sixteen centuries and is the work of over forty human authors.

→This compilation of booklets contains an astonishing variety of literary styles.

- →Narratives and Dialogues
- →Poetry and Psalms
- →Songs and Allegory
- →History and Prophecy

→The accounts in the Bible were not generally written down as they occurred.

→They were told over and over again and handed down through the years before someone finally wrote them down.

→Yet the same themes may be found throughout the book.

→Along with the diversity there is also a remarkable unity.

→In addition to all the above, the Bible is this:

→It is a guide for living life to the full. It gives us a road map for the perilous journey of life.
→It is a storehouse of wonderful stories for children and grownups.
→It is a refuge in trouble.
→It is a treasury of insight as to who we are.

*Rule of Thumb: It is a sourcebook for everyday living. We find standards for our conduct, guidelines for knowing right from wrong, principles to help us in a confused society where so often "anything goes."*

# Who Wrote the Bible?

→The Bible is a collection of writings from about forty contributors, thirty in the Old Testament and ten in the New Testament.

→The stories which have been preserved in the **Old Testament** date from the earliest times and were both written down and transmitted orally.

→As time passed they were collected together and received by the Hebrews as coming to them by God's mandate.

→The prophets transmitted God's messages to humans, while many of the Psalms articulate cries of people to God.

→The **New Testament** stories and teachings were widely circulated among the early Christian churches.

→The letters of Paul to churches in several cities were the earliest writings now found in the New Testament.

→Many other letters and epistles were circulated as well.

→Gradually it became clear to the early churches which writings were truly inspired and which were not.

→All forty of these authors, spread out over 1600 years, have a unified message in spite of their great diversity in language, culture and time.

→The reason:  these forty or so writers are all secondary authors.

→God is the one primary Author.

→The Bible came to us from God himself, who used all these human authors to give us His message, through the presence and inspiration of His Spirit.

# When was the Bible Written?

→The Bible is a collection of writings, and the earliest ones were set down nearly 3500 years ago.

→The first five books of the Bible are attributed to Moses and are commonly called the Pentateuch (literally "five scrolls").

→Moses lived between 1500 and 1300 BC, though he recounts events in the first eleven chapters of the Bible that occurred long before his time.

→These earliest accounts were handed down from generation to generation.

→The earliest writing began when symbols were scratched or pressed on clay tablets.

→The Egyptians refined this technique and developed an early form of writing known as hieroglyphics.

→Moses was “educated in all the learning of the Egyptians.”

→God gave Moses "two tablets of the Testimony, the tablets of stone inscribed by the finger of God"(Exodus 31:18).

→The earliest writings in the Bible were set down around 1400 BC.

*Rule of Thumb: The earliest writings in the Bible were set down around 1400 BC.*

→The writings of the thirty or so other contributors to the Old Testament span a thousand years!

→They recount the times and messages from Moses' successor, Joshua, to the last of the Old Testament prophets, Malachi, who wrote his little tract around 450 BC.

→Between the Old and New Testaments, there was a 500 year period were nothing was contributed to the Bible.

→Alexander the Great conquered much of the world and the Greek language was introduced to the Hebrews and became the language of the world.

→The New Testament was written during a much shorter period, i.e. during the last half of the first century AD.

→The coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, ignited the flame that produced the New Testament, as the new faith swept across the Near East and then westward to Greece and on to Rome.

→Half of the New Testament books were contributed by one man, the Apostle Paul.

→The Bible closes with a majestic book of visions and dramatic views of the future.